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5 February 1958

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Personnel

SUBJECT: Loss of Experienced Personnel - your
memorandum of 28 January 1958

1. This Office has lost a few capable and experienced employees to academic institutions and to private industry, but we do not consider that our attrition rate has been serious. We have no concern that any particular outside employer or institution is attempting systematically to recruit from O/NE.

2. O/NE is uniquely favored by the nature of its mission and the smallness of its staff in its efforts to provide all personnel with varied and challenging tasks and responsibilities. In concert with agency-wide programs and on our own initiative we attempt to provide our people with maximum opportunities to broaden their experience base and to maintain outside contacts to the extent consistent with security. The members of the Board and Staff of O/NE who stay with the agency do so because they find satisfactions, rewards, and stimuli in O/NE which transcend the disadvantages of relatively low government salaries, restrictions on publication and free circulation in the academic or business world, and lack of general recognition for individual pieces of excellent work.

3. However, we do have problems, and this seems to me an excellent opportunity to lay before you another phase of the personnel picture, and one peculiarly poignant to us - that of recruitment. Recruiting for the Board seems to me the world's most difficult problem. The men we want are naturally the headliners in our society. We want two or three wise and experienced military men. They must be attracted by our line of work and willing to participate in all phases of it: the military, the political, the economic, the Soviet Bloc, our friends, the neutrals - and even Antarctica. They must not have been prominently partisan in interservice rows. In short, they must

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be among the very small number of retiring generals and admirals which the business community is endeavoring to recruit at three to ten times the salary.

4. We should have a few distinguished academics, preferably on tours of one to three years. The professors we want are usually the mainstays of their universities and are receiving salaries comparable to or even in excess of the top of the GS scale. (I do not think that this latter point has been fully understood.) There are other difficulties associated with the recruitment of these men, most important of which is probably the inhibition laid upon publication and presenting papers before their professional associations.

5. Almost above all, we will always require one or two Board members with a specialization in foreign economic matters. It is my conviction that the kind of men we want are much more likely to come from business than from the universities. The kind of wisdom, knowledge, and sophistication which Harold Linder has derived from a career in international finance is almost certainly not to be matched in a university faculty. We have had perhaps more than the usual difficulties associated with trying to recruit this type of man for government service in peace-time. If he is to work for the government, he would usually prefer a policy to an intelligence job.

6. Even within the Agency itself we have difficulty in contriving the assignment of the senior intelligence officers who would be, in my opinion, ideally fitted for a tour on the Board.

7. While we have no easy answers to the problems of recruiting and attrition, we do feel that they are of equal importance and that serious attention must be paid to both if we are to maintain the standards of the office.

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SHERMAN KENT
Assistant Director
National Estimates

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